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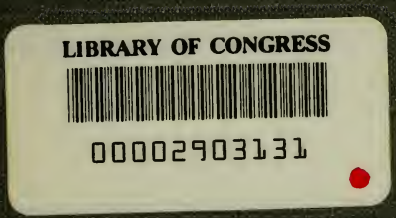

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WAYSIDE WILDINGS.

A. E. PICKENS.

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WAYSIDE WILDINGS.

A. E. P.

SPRING IS COMING.

O, THE spring is coming, coming!
Tripping over the hills,
Unlocking the hearts of the blossoms,
Tuning the prattling rills;

Clothing the earth with velvet,
Draping the bare old trees,
Filling with birds' sweet carols
Each odor-laden breeze.

She brings the wooing sunshine,
And showers of golden rain,
That over field and wayside
Will wake the flowers again.

VIOLET.

SHE came when bright gems
Of silver were strung
Out on the willows;
When new grass among
Lay little white forms
Of the late-fallen snow,
That up the noon sunbeams
On misty wings go.

A bluebird had told us,
With song full of cheer,
That wonders and beauties
Were soon to appear:
The trees crowned with leaves,
The fields starred with flowers,
And singing and gladness
Would fill sunny hours.

So, when this welcome,
Dear flower to earth came,
We thought of the sweetest
Of spring flowers for name.
And never was one
The springs have brought yet
More precious and lovely
Than dear Violet.

LITTLE HANDS.

LITTLE leaves fluttering,
Their shadows at play,
Lily bells swaying,
More graceful than they
Are two beautiful
Hands seldom still,
That to the finger-tips
Joyously thrill;
Folding, unfolding,
Pure as a flower,
Dear in their helplessness,
Needing love's dower.

Moulded so daintily,
Tinted so fair,
Can it be they will have
Burdens to bear?
Tempted by wrong, will they
Battle for right,
Doing whatever
They may with their might?
Strong in endeavor,
Helpful and kind,
Will they bear heavenward
Sheaves they shall bind?

Tendril-like, twining
Our hearts through and through,
May naught of earth ever
Their clinging undo.

BABY'S FEET.

[To a little one, upon assuming her first short dress.]

AS pretty and pink as blossoms in May,
Under white coverings, so long hid away,
Are two dimpled feet, that know freedom today.

"Goodby," they say, "to all stockings and shoes,"
A-dancing like sunbeams over night's dews,
Twinkling like humming birds' wings o'er a rose.

Now up and now down, so joyous and light,
Under and over, now hidden from sight,
Could any one guess the left from the right?

Never seemed birdie more glad to be free;
Or butterfly gayer o'er gardens to flee,
Than dear, wee Sunny-face, on mamma's knee.

We lovingly watch thy innocent play;
Thy little hands lifted, and face, seem to say,
"If only I'd wings, I'd up and away."

So from our joy, that thy happiness brings,
One grateful heart-prayer to heaven upsprings,
That God hath not yet, darling, given thee wings.

And, O, may He guide these dear little feet,
On, on, till life's wandering is all complete,
On, on, to a Freedom than this more sweet.

BABY'S BATH.

SPATTER and dash,
O what good fun!
Patter and splash,
Dear, happy one!

From crown to toes
Alive with glee,
Till all the house
Rings merrily.

Dew-drops cover
The flower so fair,
Gems fall over
His silken hair.

Lily lake-hid,
Or sun in mist,
Come as you're bid,
Be dressed and kissed.

Cuddle and cling,
Yes, so, and so,
Mamma will sing,
To dream-land go.

In dream-land learn
What angels see,
Then homeward turn
With smiles for me.

BABY'S LESSON.

ONE step, another, yet one more—
Come, little trembler, on;
Strong, loving arms wait just before,
Their fold will soon be won.

Come, come again, the fall ne'er mind,
It is not far to go;
And sweet rewarding thou shalt find
From one who loves thee so.

Art weary now? Oh, rest thee then;
Love, Patience close beside,
Will watch and wait, and yet again
Be to thee guard and guide.

Weak steps we take, perhaps we fall;
Yet know, though right or wrong,
God loves us, pities, knows it all,
And waiteth, oh, so long!

THREE YEARS OLD.

HAPPY boy Bertie is glad for the day,
Glad for its sunshine, glad for its play.
Finds his best pleasures in funniest things,
Sees wonderful wealth in a bundle of strings.

Philosopher-like, in sticks and in stones
Knows beauty and value, and many he owns.
He covers the floor with his remnants of toys,
And thinks there's no music like plenty of noise.

With a stick in his hand and a broom for a horse,
The range of the house is the grandest race-course.
He cares for a shovel far more than for books,
And hoeing and raking a farmer he looks.

But when with the mallets he's pounding, we see
The noisiest carpenter living, he'll be.
And what does he think of his alphabet blocks?
They're only for chimneys, to fall with hard knocks.

Well, what does he think when is ended the day?
He drops asleep quickly, and don't stop to say.
He lives just the life of a dear, happy boy;
And always, as now, we hope he'll bring joy.

ROBIN AND CANARY.

(IN THE SPRING.)

ONE morning, all sweet with the breath of the May,
A Robin to Canary was chatting quite gay,
Canary in-doors and Robin at play.

Sang Robin, "Why don't you come out where we are?
I'm sure you would think it was jollier far
Than sitting caged in. Can't you break down a bar?

"We have such nice frolics out here in the trees,
Flying and skipping wherever we please,
And soon there'll be better times even than these,

"When building our nests in those tall trees nigh,
And little ones come with the flowers, by and by;
Such fun 'tis to teach them to sing and to fly.

"Why can't you come out? You'd never again
Be foolish and go into that little pen!"
Poor birdie! he's scarcely a tune sung since then,

But mopes in his cage and chirps very low;
I can't say if moulting's the reason, or no,
And almost it seems we must let the bird go.

Yet dangers would face him on every hand;
So, though the May-time is decking the land,
We'll keep him, though why birdie can't understand.

ROBIN AND CANARY.

(SEQUEL.)

HOW Canary to-day is singing away!
If only poor robin could hear!
But where he is gone is something unknown,
For birdies, like stars, disappear.

So hopeful was he, 'twas grievous to see
How suffering came, and harm.
He took a dear mate, that early and late
Four little blue eggs kept warm.

One morn there was seen, down through the spruce-green,
Four little birds calling for food;
Back and forth from the nest—well, none could have guessed
How Robin would toil for his brood.

United in care, no happier pair
In garden or wood could be found,
Till one morning came and showed—oh, such shame!
But one poor dead bird on the ground.

THE BEE AND MAIDEN.

THE gold of the willow's tassels
Peeped from its silvery fur
Long, long, ere a summer's blossom
Had deemed it wise to stir,
And a group of bees came gleaning
For sweets, with buzz and whir.

Came a little maiden skipping
With heart like bird of spring,
That from all the joy within it
Could only sing, and sing,
That from all the love within it
Found joy in everything.

She paused in her happy pastime,
Light hovering like a bee,
With wistful eyes, and joyful cries,
Just by the willow tree;
For, oh! Spring's early offerings there
Were treasures good to see.

Came the bee and maiden gleaning,
One sweets, and beauty one,
And wealth for each was gathered there
For future store begun;
But the maiden's prize, soul food, soul full,
Was far the sweeter one.

KITTY AND SPRING-TIME.

THE kitty was sitting at Daisy's feet,
Washing her paws,
And cleaning her claws;
She'd just had a dinner of milk and meat.

Daisy was thinking what spring-time had done:
Filled all the hours
With song and with flowers,
Till everything seemed glad under the sun.

Daisy was grave, as if thanks she would say
To her Father in heaven
For all He had given
That made all the world so sweet for her play.

Only a moment, though,—then with a fling
She tossed back her curls,
Gave two or three whirls,
And then asked kit what she thought of the spring.

Kitty had settled herself for a doze,
But stretched herself out,
And rolling about,
Shocked Daisy by saying,—what do you suppose?

"Miew! spring? O, yes! I'm liking it much,
With birdies to watch,
And birdies to catch,
I'm just a bit weary of mice and all such!"

AT PLAY.

THERE'S a rogue at play in my sunlit room,
And scarcely he rests from fun;
Floor, window, shelf, or closet's gloom
All are to him as one.

He opens the books and peeps within,
The papers turns inside out,
Snatches my thread, and thinks no sin
To throw my work about.

He clutches the curtains and whisks them down,
Then pulls at the picture cords,
Tosses my hair in a way his own,
Nor heeds my coaxing words.

I wonder if one so glad and young
Will ever be prim and old?
He answers not, for he has no tongue—
Yet tells sweet tales as are told.

He climbs the walls, yet has no feet;
No wings, but flies the same;
No hands, no head, but breath so sweet—
For West Wind is his name.

THE LITTLE GREEN LEAF.

A WEE, folded leaf, just peeped from the ground,
Tremblingly lifted its head to look round,
"O, where am I now; what am I to do?"
Little leaf wondered, the world looked so new.

A bush overhead a dewdrop shook down,
That sparkled and flashed, the happy leaf's crown;
Then came a sunbeam, all golden and warm;
To catch it, the leaf unfolded each arm;
A passing soft breeze a something sweet said;
The leaf, as to listen, raised smartly its head.

Unfolded, upraised—the little leaf so
Had done all it could—to be, and to grow.
To grow, but for what? sun, breeze would not tell,
But autumn may show it did its work well.

PUSSY WILLOW.

PUSSY Willow! Pussy Willow!
What are you about?
Here 's the ground all white with snow,
Yet you 've ventured out;
Not a bright companion flower,
Not a bird to sing,
While the March winds show their power
Battling with the spring.
Pussy Willow! Pussy Willow!
With your silver hair
In the sunlight all aglow,
Are you lonely there?

"Lonely! why, 't is glorious living
Out here where the sun
Warms my sister buds to giving
Greetings, one by one.
Lonely! when the air 's all trembling
With the rustle near
Of such troops of flowers assembling,
That *you* may not hear.
Lonely! when a sad heart 's lighter
My gray dress to spy,
I 'd ne'er ask one hour brighter,
Gladder; no, not I."

BESSIE'S THOUGHTS.

BIRDIE! how lovely your tree home must be
When warmly the sunbeams there fall;
I often have thought that a home in a tree
To me would be better than all.

Some mornings I've seen it with gems glit'ring bright,
More gay than the home of a king;
If singing is telling how great your delight,
I'm sure I don't wonder you sing.

You have curtains of green all speckled with gold,
With dots of sky-blue woven through,
And leafy-lined stairways in numbers untold,
So pretty and fitting for you.

And draperied columns to loftiest hall,
With prettiest wreathings entwined;
What cool, shady nooks, so inviting to all,
Like arbors that sway in the wind!

The light, happy breezes free wandering there
Tell tales of the beautiful flowers;
And pictures the fairest must be everywhere
You gaze from the uppermost towers.

Yes, birdie! when through it the soft sunbeams stray,
How lovely your tree home must be!
But when the storms come and the night time so gray,
I guess *my* home's better for me.

THE TWO ROSES.

SAID Red Rose to White Rose,
"Pray, how do you do?
I've watched you awaking,
Just here above you.

"How can you be happy,
So low at my feet,
Trying to grow there
So humble and sweet?

I'd not be so lowly,
I'd see, and be seen;
Why don't you look up here,
These windows between?"

Before little White Rose
Had lifted her face,
A dear little maiden,
All sunshine and grace,

Had plucked her and kissed her,
Then bore her away,
The happiest flower
Of all that bright day.

One rose in her meekness
Found loving and care;
One rose in her pride
Left lonely, though fair.

TO NELLIE.

DO I love to be called Auntie
By a little girl like you,
Though we have no kin but friendship?
Yes, indeed, I do.

Do you love to have the flowers
Nod as you pass by,
Breeze-tossed, seem to touch your garments,
Just to catch your eye?

Do you love to have the wild birds
Answer to your call?
Or when little leaves in dropping
Kiss you as they fall?

Love is sweet from these, but sweeter,
Dearer far from you;
So I love to have you call me
Auntie; yes, I do!

GOING TO THE PARTY.

A MONTH-OLD kit,
A wee, wee bit,
Was to a party going;
In ribbons dressed,
She looked her best,
So tiny and so knowing.

An offering
Would Annie bring
To place among the treasures,
That Katie sweet
Would gladly greet
With all her birthday pleasures.

So at the door
Stood coach and four
('Twas Dollie's coach, I'll mention),
And four wee girls,
In crimps and curls,
Who, sure, were all attention.

Had Kitty been
In truth a queen,
No slaves had been more tender;
They wrapped her so
From ears to toe!
And how she breathed, I wonder.

The gifts they gave!
Did Kit behave?
'Twould be no use to warn her,
So in a heap
She went to sleep,
All cuddled in a corner!

CLEANING THE STOVE.

I'VE been so busy, Mamma,
I wish you'd come and see,
My little doll-house stove was red
And soiled as it could be;
But now it's all cleaned nicely;
I took the ink, you know,
And with my little dusting-brush
I rubbed it on,—just so.

And don't it shine? O Mamma!
Your eyes look big at me!
My apron? Why, my fingers got
As black as they could be,
And so I had to wipe 'em,
And what else could I take!
The towel? Why, that got all wet
With ink; for, goodness sake,

This naughty, naughty inkstand
Went tipping itself down,
And spotted all the carpet,
You see where it looks brown;
So with the towel, Mamma,
I got it out,—about;
I'm sorry now I did it,
I guess it'll all wash out!

THE RAINDROPS' CALL.

"PEEP up! peep up!" the raindrops say
In whispers low;
"Come, little grasses, wake to-day,—
Gone is the snow.
Come now from out your wintry homes,
Lay carpets soft, for sweet Spring comes.

"A tiny drop by every door
We've set for you,
That you may come more bright and pure
For passing through;
We'll give you crowns of pearls to wear,
And strings of gems to make you fair.

"Come, grasses, softest winds shall greet
With news of Spring;
The birds are here to sing you sweet
Their welcoming.
Come, then, for all the flowers stay
Till you have heralded the way."

EASTER.

WE know, yes, we know the sweet spring time is here,
Though under the hedges lie drifts of the snow.
For the birds have carolled it loudly and clear,
And God has made all His little birds know.

How gladly we welcome their free, happy songs,
That tell of bright pleasures the season will bring,
But, O, unto you, little children, belongs
A part in the chorus the birds may not sing.

You know, as they cannot, Who loved you, and said
Of such is His heavenly kingdom above,
Who died for our sakes, and Who rose from the dead,
To show us how endless and true is His love;

To tell of the joys that may always be ours,
That never will fade, in a beautiful clime;
Then let the birds sing of the waking of flowers,
Sing you: "Christ is risen," 'tis glad Easter time!

THE SUN-RAY.

"YOU'VE waked me from sleep,
You little sun-ray,
Opened my eyelids
And showed me bright day.
Where did you come from?
How long were you near?
What were you doing
Before you came here?"

"I came with the sun,
Have been to and fro,
Can't stop a minute
So far I must go.
Doing? why, painting
A cloud gold and red
To ride in, then left it
Somewhere overhead.

"Down through a tree-top
I wakened each bird;
Such musical greeting
You seldom have heard;
Opened some flower-cups,
Flashed through the fresh dew,
Set leaf-shadows dancing,
Came here to see you!

"To comfort and warm
A sick child to-day
I promised, so good-bye,"
Said little sun-ray.
He hurried by me
On a mission of love;
Just one little sunbeam
From the great sun above.

BESS AT COUSIN WILL'S.

MISCHIEVOUS Will, with his eyes of blue,
Fun-light and joy-light are sparkling through,
Ever is seeking some mischief new.

Put kitty near mice, give honey to bees,
To robins give cherries; happier than these
Is Will if somebody's by to tease.

So, really, 'twasn't a bit of surprise
When Bessie came in with tears in her eyes,
Larger than plums in Thanksgiving pies.

They had climbed up the bank, some flowers had found;
While Bess was plucking, the rogue turned round,
And sent her rolling way to the ground.

He locked her into the stable, then,
On more fun bent, let her out again;
Such boots as came out of the old pig-pen!

He begged her so long in his cart to get,
The consequence was poor Bess was upset;
The nettles he gave her she'll never forget.

He sent her hunting through barn and shed
For Watch, who had been a whole week dead;
Then off to the marsh for flag-roots sped.

Teasing, then kissing the one he has vexed,
How best to show grief he's very perplexed,
The same time thinking what to do next.

Mischievous Will, with his eyes of blue,
Fun-light and joy-light are glancing through,
Ever is seeking some mischief new.

IN THE FIELD.

GAY, sunny-haired Lill, and earnest-eyed Will,
To-day like glad birds free,
Went roaming the field's wild dell and hill,
Happy as happy could be.

They wandered knee-high through waves of grass,
White-crested with daisy wreaths;
Through clover, that, crushed and bruised as they pass,
Yet only in sweetness breathes.

Oh, many the treasures they proudly brought,
Of berry, or nest, or flower,
From the slopes and nooks, yes, every spot
From the hedge to woodbine bower.

From barberry ledge and buttercup dell
Came gold by the sun refined,
And red wine-globes from strawberry knoll,
In a last-year's nest, leaf-lined.

They brought gay lilies in purple and gold,
With ribbons all ruffled and veined;
Seed dandelions they coaxed to unfold
The truths their white heads contained.

They joyed in promise the hazel-boughs held,
The sweets of wild-cherry feasts;
And up through the willows glad eyes beheld
Mother birds watching their nests.

They gathered sweet flag from the brook's dry bed,
And out from a shady spot,
"To keep for trimmings at Christmas," they said,
Bright mosses and ferns they brought.

O sunny-haired Lill, and earnest-eyed Will!
In the future will you so
In the world's great field together still
Find joys wherever you go?

THE BEST.

BUTTERCUP gold! to me unfold
How came your shining dress of gold
Down from the sun to you?
"I but looked up and he gave it me,
So still I look his face to see,
'Tis all a flower can do."

Succory blue! oh, tell me true,
How will you keep your bit of blue
You took from the sky to-day?
"Oh, the morn will find it fresh and bright,
For I'll fold it in when comes the night,
Safe in my heart away."

Treasure better than ye have I,
Than gold of sun or blue of sky,
That all the world may share,
May upward look and daily win,
By night may fold the joy within,
'Neath folded wings of prayer.

BABY AND I.

BABY and I in the twilight sweet,
Hearing the weary birds repeat
Cheery good-nights from tree to tree,
Dearest of all day's comfort see.
For weary, too,
With kiss and coo,
He gives up all his world—for me.

Baby and I in the twilight's glow,
Watching the branches to and fro
Waving good-nights to the golden west,
Welcome the hour we love the best.
We rock and sing,
Till Sleep we bring,
Who folds him in her downy nest.

Lingering still in the twilight gray,
After the radiance fades away,
I watch my darling, so still, so fair,
With thankful heart that to my care,
For happiness
No words express,
Awhile God trusts a gift so dear.

As in his little bed I place
My babe in all his slumbering grace,
Heaven's starry lamps are lit on high,
One, angel-borne, now flashes by,
And by their light,
Through all the night,
Celestial watchers will be nigh.

A BIRD-STORY.

SUCH gladsome stories came to me,
When leaves began their whispering,
Like fairies, in the maple tree,
While May was crowning Spring.

The fragrant breezes brought them down
In happy songs that thrilled the air,
At morning, evening, and at noon,
About a bird-home there.

* * * * *

June came, and all her roses laid
At Summer's feet, when, one dark night,
The wild winds woful havoc made;
At morn, oh, what a sight!

Four tiny birds were on the ground,
Two dead, two peeping piteously;
While parent birds, in helpless round,
Wailed, oh, how grievously.

No care could bird to nest restore—
Two more ere evening came were dead;
Yet summer flowers no mourning wore,
And songs rang sweet o'erhead.

But One had marked the young birds' fall,
Who cares for you, for me, for all.

THE DEAD PLAYMATE.

NO wonder three little girls under a tree
Were solemn one midsummer morn,
Nor heeded the sunshine, as bright as could be,
For Pinkie, their playmate, was gone.

Pinkie! why, that was the funniest way
To name a dog, black as a coal!
But any who knew him as well as did they
Would never have thought it was droll.

"He 'served the prettiest name," they said,
Because he was honest and good,
Knowing and gentle whenever they played,
And never grew sulky and rude.

They made him a cross of the pink-topped burrs,
Set thickly with flowers about;
They covered his grave with wreaths and bouquets
And planted there many a root.

TO A CRICKET.

"CRICKET, lonely, noon-day rover,
Through brown aster rows and clover,
Autumn winds blow wild to-day,
Do you list to what they say?

"Cricket! Cricket! cease your singing,
Saddest news to you they're bringing."
But he sang and sang again,
Still the same glad, cheery strain.

What cared he for bright days going?
What knew he of frosts and snowing?
This he knew, to sing, not fret,
Through bright hours of sunshine yet.

Sing and sing, for God's sure keeping
Guards him till, for winter's sleeping,
He shall sing himself to rest;
More than this he thought nor guessed.

CALLING.

BY FIVE-YEAR-OLD BESSIE.

I HAVE a tall great cousin,
He's much as ten, I guess,
He does the kindest things for me,
And calls me his queen Bess.
What do you think he did one day?
I didn't know what to do,
I was so tired with every play,
And wanted something new.

So then he took his little cart
And said, "Let's go make calls;
So now jump in, and off we'll start,
And don't mind little falls."
I ran and got my hat, you know
The one with daisies fine,
And took my baby (that's my doll),
Oh, how the sun did shine!

We went out to the concert first,
Up by the stony brook,
Where birds and frogs sang songs by turns,
Without a single book.
I liked the birds' sweet songs the best.
The frogs sing out so loud;
I thought that one did pretty well,
But, oh, he was so proud!

We stayed a little while, and called
On Mrs. Squirrel then;

She saw us come and ran away,
We thought we'd call again!
A butterfly was going home,
And everywhere he strayed
We went, to see his house, but he
Flew in a wall and stayed.

We called upon a sparrow then,
For Willie knew just where;
But, oh, she cried and flew about,—
She did not want us there.
We thought of calling on the bees,
But were a bit afraid,
For they don't like much company
Until their honey 's made.

Some little toads were going home,
We followed quite a way,
But when they saw us they turned round,
And went away to play.
I told my cousin Willie then
To take me home again;
That no one wanted company
I thought was very plain.

My ride was very pleasant,
I only had three falls,
But think I'll never go again,—
I'm 'scouraged making calls!
But if some one should call on me,
I wouldn't run away,
Nor hide, nor cry, nor turn around,
But just sit down and play.

THE TWO DOLLS.

CLARIBEL sits in her silken dress,
In the parlor cold and fine;
In print and turban is old black Bess,
Out in the warm sunshine,

Helping to form the prettiest group,
At an out-doors, sand-pie tea;
Claribel only can sit and mope
In her lonely dignity.

Too fair is her skin, too rich her dress,
For the sunlight or for play;
'Tis little she knows of happiness,
Save on some festival day.

Oh, surely 'twas easy for one to guess
Which doll their mamma loved best,
When seeing how often old black Bess
Close in her arms would be pressed.

So homely Bess, in her homely gown,
Knows plenty of love and fun;
Claribel sits in grandeur alone;
Which is the happier one?

UNDER THE APPLE-TREE.

THERE'S a beautiful airy cage, roofed o'er
With the apple-tree's leaf and fruit;
Flowers, sun-flecks, and shadows dance over the floor,
At the call of the crickets' flute.
Of a misty gold are the bars and door,
By the sun in the west forged out.

A sand-heap is there where cooking is done
For many a company gay;
Swing, tilt, and hammock, for frolic and fun,
And somebody's there at play,
In the half-veiled glow of the autumn sun,
With Kitty and dear dollie May.

Merrily Kitty with grasshoppers plays,
While Dollie, tied fast in the swing,
Now hither, now thither, with every breeze sways
Like a butterfly dreaming on wing.
Oh, somebody there sees happier days
Than they know at the court of a king.

How soon will be faded the beautiful cage,
Fruit garnered, leaf fled from the bough,
And soon, oh, so soon, will life's burdens engage
The heart pure and innocent now;
Yet memory will picture these hours when age
Has scattered his snows on her brow.

THE LITTLE LEAF.

"YOU little bright leaf, so slow fluttering down,
You've changed your green robes for crimson and brown,
Why is it you leave your nice home on the tree?"
"Oh, I'm old enough and I want to be free!"

So slowly he sailed, then lay on the green
Watching if grasshoppers' homes could be seen;
Soon a brisk breeze whispered, "Come, come with me,
We'll journey together, and both will be free."

Then off with the breeze he went wandering away,
Till, worn, bent, and ragged, he begged her to stay,
And let him find somewhere a moment of rest,
But the frolicsome breeze would not grant his request.

Some children passed near; the breeze whispered, "look!"
And said something dreadful of "death in a book;"
And hurrying off she whirled him around,
Now up to the fence-tops, now down to the ground.

He was rolled on the gravel and tossed on the brier,
And barely escaped the gardener's brush fire;
She poised the poor trembler just over the well,
Off again on the rock-heap well mangled he fell.

She twirled him once more, till he dropped quite dead
In the tangling leaves of the strawberry bed;
Then away she hied in her cruel sport,
And I saw some other poor leaves she had caught.

So always I'm sorry whenever I see
Little leaves try from their homes to be free.

THE WISH-BONE.

THE monstrous turkey was nigh gone
Upon Thanksgiving day,
When papa spied the wish-bone out,
And said to little May:
"Now here is something precious, May,
Just take off all the meat,
And let it dry awhile, then we
Will wish for something sweet;
For candies, or for dolls, or books,
For Christmas time or now;
And you or I will have our wish,
Papa will show you how."

To May the wish-bone's virtues were
A mystery quite new,
So young was she; she danced for joy,
Her eyes went dancing, too.
But she had had of dinner then
A bounteous, goodly store,
And of either turkey or dessert,
Could not eat one bit more.

Now kitty slept upon the rug
Just where a sunbeam lay,
And such a wise and brilliant thought
Occurred to little May!
She caught up kitty from her nap,
And said, "Now, kitty, dear,
I'll hold you here upon my lap
While you this bone make clear
Of every speck of meat for me."
And kit most willing was
To do her part, and do it well,
In such a worthy cause.

But hark! crack! crack! crunch! crunch!
May heard,
And cried, "Oh, kitty! kitty!
You've eaten bone and all! Oh, dear!"
So we could only pity.

COASTING.

OH, the jolliest coasters that ever were seen
Were Winnie, and Minnie, and brave Harry Green,
In the warmest of wrappings, from toe up to chin,
That ever have covered such little folks in.

Oh, bright was the sunshine, though cold was the air,
And snow-gems were glistening everywhere,
But brighter than these were the sparkling glad eyes;
They always tell truly what in the heart lies.

Now coasting, and sliding, and snow-balls to throw,
Make merriest frolics the children can know;
So Minnie, and Winnie, and Harry so bold,
Had all that their hearts of pleasure could hold.

Till—the saddest of coasters that ever were seen,
Were Winnie, and Minnie, and poor Harry Green;
Cold fingers, cold toes, and with Hal's bleeding nose!
So, crying, to mamma the brave trio goes!

WINTER BIRDS.

"OH, wee brown birds of winter!
Ye fear not cold or snow,
But stay the days to gladden,
Though sweeter songsters go.

"What mean your merry chirpings,
That seem but half a song?"
"There's One who knows, and hears us,
For we to him belong.

"And we, brown birds of winter,
Though poor our song may be,
Know He who heareth, careth
For us as well as thee."

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

THERE were beautiful clouds o'er the deep, blue sky,
Like whitest of snow-drifts flown on high;
There were glittering fields of pure, pure snow,
Like heaven's own whiteness fallen below;
So the earth and the sky their beauties had blent,
When the children to grandmamma's Christmas-day went.

There were fringes of crystal and borders of gems,
On fences, and house-tops, like kings' diadems;
There were tall trees jewelled like daintiest lace,
And evergreens knotted and tasselled with grace,
But the loveliest tree of them all that day,
Was grandmamma's tree in Christmas array.

Not richer for gifts than the dear, loving thought,
That gladdened their hearts with the joy it brought,
Till the day so hallow'd in peace and good will,
With the angel-songs seemed echoing still;
And we knew there was One who was glad in Heaven
That Christ and Christmas to earth were given.

SEEKING SUNSHINE.

REACHING for bright spots of sunshine,
Baby creeps about the floor,
Coos, and grasps ere leafy shadows
Sweep and shut them o'er.
Seeking after spots of sunshine,
I, too, baby, love to be.
Far along the past I see them
Shining bright for me—

Shining bright, till memory seemeth
Like a cheery, sun-flecked room,
And, like you, I strive to hold them
Ere they fade in gloom.
Would we, little one, learn wisdom,
Many, many wearying hours
Would we know such sweet employment,
And more joys be ours.

What if life seem now but cheerless,
Sunlight has been and will be;
Reaching out through hope or memory,
Brightness we may see.
For we know where shadows deepest
Long o'er weary lives have lain,
Ever hath the good All-Father
Sunlight brought again.

A SONG OF SPRING.

"COMING, coming, coming!"
The Spring's dear voice is heard
From upland, vale and wildwood,
In trill of happy bird.
"Coming, coming, coming!"
She whispers from the hills,
And sings it to the flowers
Asleep by tripping rills.

In haloed grace she cometh
With smiles and frowns to-day,
But wooing, golden sunbeams
Kiss all her tears away.
Lo! answering her greeting,
Each with a rainbowed crown,
In crowds the grasses gather
And hide the meadows' brown.

Soft listening, half-way dreaming,
Their feet the flowers stir;
Impatient for their robing,
Reach loyal trees to her.
The hooded ferns are waking,
The sweet-briar reddens nigh,
And violet and pansy
As rival comers vie.

The willow's beads are glistening,
A bee on idle wing
His busy tune is humming
In welcome to the Spring.
And listening, waiting, listening,
For each cadence of her voice,
How every heart with Nature
Doth gratefully rejoice.

CALLING THE FLOWERS.

LIST! the April rain is falling,
And its whispers on the air
To the summer's flowers are calling,
Calling, calling, everywhere.

Call them, rains; oh, call them early,
In their radiant garments all,
Blue, and gold, and pink, and pearly,
Bid them hasten at your call.

Bid the loveliest of their number,
Where a wearied head lies low
In the peace of dreamless slumber,
There, in troops, with sweetness go.

Till the fresh mound, hid in flowers,
Summer's dearest haunt shall be;
Typing so perennial bowers
Waiting us the loved ones see.

IN THE GARDEN.

THEY all are here—the garden flowers;
We greet them, every one,
Each dear, dear face, in its old-time place.
In fresh, glad life begun.

Peony, blushing as if she came
Scarce willing to be seen;
Sweet William, sweet in more than name,
And Pinks in mist-hid green.

Brave Hyacinth, and Crocus gay,
And Tulips bright and bold,
Strew garlands at the feet of May,
Of pink, white, blue and gold.

Here Lily of the Valley holds
Her wrappings closely yet;
There Baby's-Breath its tiers unfolds
By Daffodils thick-set.

Spireas pink and white are here,
And soon their waving plumes
Will sway above the Bluebells near
And bright-eyed Pansy blooms.

And Dielytra, Columbine,
And sweet-breathed Phlox are come,
While Ragged Robin, proud and fine,
Walls in the garden home.

And many more, yes, all, are here,
Though hid the winter through;
Not rare exotics, yet all dear—
These olden friends and true.

MAYING.

A LOVED voice said,
"Come Maying, come Maying with me!"
I shook my head,
"Nay, nay, not with thee.

"To thy young heart
Should sunlight, song and flower
Full joy impart;
I would not cloud an hour

"Of thy glad May;
So with hearts light as thine,
Go, idly stray,
And fresh, wild flowers entwine.

"Like happy bird,
Sing out your heart-songs free,
With no thought stirred
Within thee, once, for me.

"I'll, too, keep May
In Memory's fields alone,
In my own way
Loved best, while thou art gone.

"For flowers are there
That never, never die,
But bloom as fair
As May were always nigh.

"So each will have
Joys we love well to-day;
'T was sorrow gave
Me sweeter flowers than May."

A PROPHECY.

MAIDEN, 'neath the apple blooms,
Where the cool winds kiss,
Where the nesting wild-bird roams,
Trilling out his bliss,
Upon thy face such tender grace,
A rose a sister rose might trace.
What calls it? Step of one who comes?
Or is 't the cool winds' kiss?

Ah me! ah me! the blooms will fall;
June's roses all will die;
Birds' songs grow still, and nests be all
Forsaken by and by;
And well I know his false heart so,
That ere the summer's glories go,
Thy cheek will pale, and sorrow's thrall
On thy young life will lie.

MAY.

BECAUSE no more stern frosts will chill,
Nor deepening snows come falling,
Because from every vale and hill
A welcome voice is calling,
Glad birds, from morning until night,
Make merry o'er their mating,
And sing and toil with rare delight,
Nest-Edens so creating;
Till buds peep out and look about,
And find 'tis time for coming,
And bees go sailing in and out,
Of winter's sweet dreams humming.

Sweet flowers, with each happy day,
Are wakening together,
And almost we may hear them say
"Good morning" to each other.
Gay streamlets down the hillsides run,
Their summer's song beginning,
And, where the unwary flowers look down,
Their hearts like lovers winning,
Bright, silvery fish, like arrows, dart,
Through lucid waters springing,
And frogs are piping loud a part
They'd have us think is singing.

And squirrels frisk, and lambkins play,
O'er young, soft grasses bounding,
While childhood's voice the long, glad day
With rapturous joy is sounding.
Soft, golden rains come flitting down
Where hopeful hands are sowing,
And bows of promise, arching, crown
The May-time, ere her going.

EDIE.

HERSELF a flower,
She came when May had made the world all sweet with them;
So fair, that He who gave her, for His diadem
Took her one summer hour.

How still and white
The wee form grew whence fled her soul so pure, so dear;
For that loved presence bright, came sorrow waiting near,
Departing day nor night.

For this the loss,—
To miss from heart and home, through all life's coming days,
What made their dearest joy—her sweet and winning ways;
An ever-present cross.

But in her gain,
Safe sheltered now within the Saviour's fold to rest,
Who loved His little ones of earth, and loved them best,
There will come peace with pain.

And waiting still
A little longer here where shadows come and go,
We soon, in heaven, once more our darling's love will know,—
There understand God's will.

AT HOME.

THE tired ones are all at home;
With slow and wearied tread and mien,
That tell of toil-full hours between
The cheery morn and this, they've come.

All day the summer's songful peace,
Its beauty, freshness, all were mine,
And brought me gladness half divine
That with the evening doth not cease.

Oh, could I, like a mantle, fold
About their weariness my joy,
My soul would know more sweet employ
Than all the happy day hath told.

Do ye so wait until we come,
O loved ones in the mansions fair?
So fold o'er us the peace ye share,
When we, the tired ones, reach home.

THE MORNING BREEZE.

THROUGH the purple gates of day
Royally rode forth the sun,
When, with something sweet to say
Joyfully to every one,
Cheerily to listless trees,
Grasses, flowers, birds and streams,
From the west a merry breeze
Rose, and woke the world from dreams.

With a rushing, bustling whir,
Such a rustling, hustling sound—
Like an ocean tide astir—
Billowy trees, like waves, rebound.
Grasses flutter in their bliss,
Dizzy dewdrops fall below;
Every leaf its mate doth kiss,
Vain, sweet flowers coquetting bow.

Now to dance in wildest grace,
Leafy shadows he awakes;
There the river's golden face
Into myriad gems he breaks.
Shakes the sweets from each wild rose,
Honeyed dews in golden spray,
How distilling, no one knows,
All the wealth he bears away.

Rouses in each fern-bowered bed
Happy butterflies from rest;
Mingles to one trill o'erhead
Songs from every wakened nest.
Weaves and folds he to and fro
Fleecy rolls of cloud, snow-white,
Piling high and piling low,
Pageants gorgeous, grand and bright.

Sweet the message that he brought,
Thirsting Earth heard not in vain;
Ere the noon, with blessing fraught,
Fell the welcome summer rain.

FOR ALL.

NOT alone in one wee hamlet,
Hill-environed, peaceful, fair,
Morning paints her dews with rainbows.
Brings her sweet airs only there.

Doth the glory of the sunset
Only in the west unfold?
Lo! the wide, free arch of heaven
Knows its purples, pink and gold.

Never sunlight, never moonlight
Seek but beauty to illume;
Captive cell and lowliest dwelling
Enter they to break the gloom.

Summer hides not song and blooming
Close within one garden wall;
Nay—with bounteous hand she scatters
Wild, sweet songs and flowers for all.

More than these doth He who made them
Shower for every heart His grace;
More than these His wise, wide loving
Brightens every time and place.

Yet, because few flowers I gather,
That, downcast, no sun I see,
Oh, how oft I doubting murmur,
"Lord! how long forsak'st thou me!"

A MORNING THOUGHT.

WE wake more oft to rosy morns
Than those with clouds o'erhung,
Though storm or star, though smile or tear,
We fall asleep among;
Perhaps to martyr-lives of pain,
To joy-sweet, care-free days;
Love holds the mingled cup we drain,
And recompense repays.

And whether lilies or the snows
For crowning earth shall be,
Or, looking up through barren boughs,
Or leaf-twined rifts, we see
God's sun, his stars, his love, his heaven,
Where morn is always fair,
Love hath to all this dear hope given,
That changeless morn to share.

A SONG.

SOFT through the open window
The sweetest, faintest song
Comes floating down the rustling
Of the maple's leafy throng.

But mother-love could bring it
Such tenderness of tone;
But mother-bird could sing it,
And only to her own.

How sweetly through the pauses
Of louder songs it runs,
Like Love's low, soothing murmurs
Unto Life's wearied ones.

'Tis love alone can bring them
Such tenderness of tone,
And only love can sing them
So dearly to its own.

THE LILY'S GEM.

WE may draw from the lake a lily,
When the summer hours are sweet,
And sparkling low in its heart of gold
A gem from the winter greet.

'Twas an icicle's bead, it may be,
That passing the window by,
A sun-lit gem, looked cheerily in,
Like the glance of a kindly eye.

On the breast of a tiny streamlet,
Then down to the lake it hied,
And wandered long, till the lily leaned
And claimed it as her pride.

There is oft in the heart of a blessing
That after a woe doth fall,
Some grace from the hour of sorrow,
The dearest joy of it all.

JUNE.

THE time for the blooming is over,
And up to the soft June skies
Look buttercup, daisy and clover,
As with worshipful eyes.

And deeper and darker the shadows
Over the woodpath play,
Or dapple the restful meadows,
Where, through the dreamy day,

Contented the cattle are lying;
And hidden in nest-hung trees,
Young songs with the old are vying;
Yet thought stays not with these.

The world is all sweet with its roses,
Now clambering in at the door,
Till where a sunbeam reposes
In shadow they dance on the floor.

Here peeping untrained through the hedges,
There climbing the garden wall,
Or humbly in wayside edges
Sweets uplifting to all.

And sweeter the days go, and rarer,
Each holding a new surprise;
I wonder if they can be fairer
To thee in Paradise.

I wonder if, through heaven's gladness,
Far more than the June brings me,
There comes one shade of the sadness
I know in missing thee.

THE NEW STRIFE.

LET us whisper close together,
Heart, to-day,
Earnestly, that we may gather
Strength from what we say.

Knowing well God's love is o'er us,
Let us see
How to meet the strife before us,
Boldly, rightfully.

We have heard its slow, sure coming,
Humbly bowed;
Even as Nature at the booming
Of far tempest cloud.

Shall we not like her, too, greet it,
Fearlessly;
And though shaken, bent, we meet it,
Crushed nor helpless be?

Let us all its higher meaning
Read aright;
Piercing past its gloom, and gleaning
Yet some rays of light.

Finding peace that follows giving
To His will;
All, e'en all the joy of living;
His love holding still.

GUIDED.

OH, never a bird will lose its way
In the network of the trees,
Nor the brook its song and tripping stay
Because it is not always day,
Or the rock a hindrance is.

See how the lovely mosses grow,
So pretty and so green,
Though the grasses try to hide them so,
And even under winter's snow
They're bright as ever seen.

From a rifted rock glad flowers peep
Out on the sunlit air;
Far downward tiny rootlets creep,
And find wealth in a wee earth heap
The breezes swept in there.

They're precious truths ye say to me,
O bird, brook, moss and flower!
Though devious ways, strife, dearth I see,
Who guideth you *my* guide will be,
However dark the hour.

THE SECRET.

MAIDIE! with the merry face,
Stay thee! tell me this:
Whence your witchery and grace,
Why your full heart's bliss?

Maidie! Maidie! I can guess
Truer than you'll say;
Pretty blushes so confess
E'en when lips say nay.

Aye, the rose is very sweet,
Aye, the violets too;
Would you so with kisses greet
Gave *I* them to you?

Maidie! than the rose's breath,
Dearer far, I ween,
Is the secret that it saith,
Love has written in.

A JUNE NIGHT.

O BEAUTIFUL and still June night!
Now roses waked to blowing,
Yet nod and dream till morning light
Brings bird, breeze, bee a-wooing.

The birds have hushed their young to rest
With many a sweet song-story,
While hues were fading east and west,
That made the sunset's glory.

Like dear home-lights on heavenly heights
God's altar fires are shining,
Bright threads of hope through wandering thoughts
Their radiant beams are twining.

From dewy flowers the night wind comes,
All sweet and cool with blessing,
Like whispers soft from spirit homes,
Like tender hands caressing,

I too have hushed my babe to rest,
With many a loved song-story,
While hues were fading east and west,
That made the sunset's glory.

Hark! on the still night air a cry
From parent bird is ringing,
That tells of fright and danger nigh—
Ah! morn will wake no singing

From one wee nest! O still June night!
With even thee is sorrow;
Bring none to me! make glad and bright
With prattle my to-morrow.

A LULLABY.

ROBIN! singing to the lilies,
Sing low, sing sweet, oh, sweet,
To the lilies in the brooklet
Sleeping at thy feet.

Sing and swing upon the willows
As they kiss the stream;
Sing low, sing sweet, oh, sweet, so sweet,
Wake not the lilies' dream.

O breeze! breathe soft your harps among,
O birds! hush all your glee;
While Robin sings his love in song
As sweet as song can be.

So sweet, so low, I cannot go,
But list as ne'er before;
Could I sing lilies' lullabies,
I'd sing them o'er and o'er.

TO A CRICKET.

CRICKET! songs of ours
Together did begin;
Thine from the low grass bowers,
Mine from my heart within.

Like sudden burst of joy
Uprose thy cheery lay,
Yet one more gladsome voice
Thrilling the golden day.

Did this sweet autumn hour
Awake anew thy love
As mine, and lead thy voice
In grateful praise above?

For this, and this, and this,
The glad things our eyes see!
And this, and this, and this,
God's gifts to you and me?

THOU GOD SEEST ME.

NOT as in childhood's morn
With these blest words to-day
Were fear and trembling born,
To cloud with awe my way.

Not that my soul more pure
Fears not Thy watchful eye;
But, oh, I so much more
Need Thee, my Father, nigh.

Not that my feet more firm
May climb the upward way;
But Thy sustaining arm
I need so oft, to stay.

More than before will glow
As blessings all divine,
Each trial I may know,
Each sorrow that is mine.

Though earth for me should be
A friendless wilderness,
Since Thou God seest me
My soul hath happiness.

SUMMER GOING.

SWIFTLY summer speeds away,
On the blooming waits decay.

Ere the roses shed their snows,
Crickets tell us, "Summer goes."

Less of song makes morning known;
Nests are empty, nestlings flown.

Even while the lilies bloom,
Down the air some dead leaves come.

Daily seeds are ripening,
Harvests are in-gathering.

Barns, with sweet, new hay heaped high,
Robbed the daisied fields just by.

As in gladness lurks regret,
Autumn's signals so are set

All along sweet Summer's way;
Prize her, prize her while we may.

GOOD NIGHT.

GOOD night to thee! o'er eastern hills
Has star-eyed evening leaned to see
The sunset gates fold in their gold:
Now comes she silently.

All day I've known thee near, so near,
Our wonted day of sweet commune,
When each to each grew yet more dear:
Oh, blessed day! fled all too soon.

I've read the books we loved to share,
I've sung the songs we oft did sing,
At table set for thee a chair,
And gave thee dearest welcoming.

Three times have song-birds waked from sleep
Sweet April's pets, the violets,
Since we were parted, I to weep,
Thou to know joys, without regrets.

Yet it is sweet to fancy so,
That thou from Heaven canst bring its cheer
To bless some days, since this we know,
That Christ has risen, and can be near.

CLIMBING.

TOILWORN, yet patiently, we climbed
The hillside's weary way;
Behind us, on far peaceful hills,
The gold of sunset lay.

With clouds bright-hued the purpling sky
O'erhead was braided o'er,
But glory by the sunset gates
The hill rose high before.

Our feet pressed up the shadowed way,
No sunlight reached to bless;
When gained, the hill-top's height revealed
Wide realms of loveliness.

So climb we, toiling day by day,
The mount that heaven doth hide,
We walk in shadow of the hill,
And climb the shaded side.

Behind us lies the sunny past,
Above, our hope and light,
But who may speak the glory theirs
Who reach the topmost height?

IN SEPTEMBER.

CLIMBING rosy cloud-bars, sunset
Piles across the eastern sky;
Slow the moon in regal glory
Mounts her violet throne on high,
Drops her misty veil and silvery
Down upon the river's face,
Spreads her softened rays far reaching,
Till the sunset hues embrace.

Comes she so, the fair queen, counting
All her wealth ere daylight dies,
Envying half the sun's wise knowing
All September's mysteries;
Listening, if by day the cricket
Still the same glad joy-bell rings,
Noting wines the grape is hiding
Under leaf-thatched coverings.

Down through orchard lanes, moss-tufted,
Droning flies yet float and dive,

And the bees, a-weary roaming,
Croon in gossip round the hive.
Fruits, red, russet, gold, and fragrant,
Peer from glossy nests o'erhead,
Or, as ours were royal footsteps,
Pave the sun-gilt way we tread.
Golden light like sunset's lingers
Through the mellow, sunny day,
Leaves widespread its magic touches
Evening doth not take away.
Golden-rod the wayside fringes,
Leaves of gold gem many a tree,
Golden tints lie in the purples
Veiling far-off mystery.
Not like summer's joyous carols
Sound the few birds' songs to-night,
But like plaintive prayers, and weary,
We from burdened souls recite.

Now the gray cloud-bars of sunset
Lie low by the eastern hills;
High and lone the moon is reigning,
And the world with beauty thrills.

TIME TO GO.

"LINGER, linger, happy hours!"
Summer calleth low,
As she strays among her bowers,
Grieving, loth to go.

One by one fair flowers went winging
Silent flights away,
Yet about her some are clinging,
As they loved to stay.

Many farewells hath she spoken;
Merry birds no more
Wake the world from sweet dreams, broken
But to live them o'er.

Faded leaves her crown is showing,
Some have dropped away;
Crickets sing, "'Tis time for going,"
Clock-like, night and day.

Time to go, for autumn lighteth
Now her evening fires,
Torch of golden-rod, and setteth
Sumach's flaming spires.

Veiled in purple cloisters dyeth
Sunset-hued far hills,
Where her lone, sad songs she trieth,
'Mong their woods and rills.

Softly, "linger precious hours!"
Through tear-haunted skies
Summer calls, and o'er her bowers
Smiles her sad good byes.

THE FLIGHT.

I WATCHED a wild bird wing his way
Through silent depths on high,
Undaunted by the sun's fierce ray,
Or lonely, pathless sky.

His flight was bold; so high, his song
Fell not in echo down;
Yet well I know, ere long, ere long—
With pinions weary grown,

For rest, for home—on earth again
His drooping wings would fold.
He sought, through wide, wide skies, in vain,
For what one nest could hold.

O human thought! thanks, thanks be given!
That, bird-like, so can fly
From bonds of earth, e'en far as heaven,
And find its rest on high.

MY REALM.

A BRIGHT leaf said, "I'm going to rest,"
And kissed me as it fell;
I said: Nay, nay, be thou my guest,
I'll keep thee long and well.
Some day the summer's story we
Together will recall,
Its rare, sweet hours to you and me,
And this blest day of all,
When here within this golden bower,
The maple's radiant dress,
I sat a queen, queen for an hour,
In ideal happiness;
A royal carpet at my feet
Deep, soft with leaves of gold;
They, fluttering, passed me by, and fell,
Like wealth we may not hold.

My realm was wide as eye might span,
By Autumn's hand made fair
With hues resplendent, and more bright
For sunlight resting there.
Afar through crimson aisles I caught
The river's joyous thrill,

Or over gorgeous, billowy trees,
As tideless seas, so still,
I marked the shadowy hills dissolve
In purple distances;
Contented Fancy questioned not
Their mystic boundaries.

Content I held the seen, the near,
One hour from thraldom free
Of care, heart-pain, and toil, and doubt,
That rule and weary me,—
One grateful hour to count joys mine,
In Nature's peace to share,
Or with the crickets at my feet
To join the chorus there.

But, Heart! how Nature, smiling, yields
Each gift the summer brought,
Bird, flower and fruit, leaf, beauty, all!
Has she no lesson taught?

O sweet Content! no kingly land
Were goodly, wanting thee;
Thou makest, if narrowed to my bower,
My realm enough for me.

FALLING LEAVES.

FLUTTER lightly, golden leaves!
Hover soft and slowly,
Seeking so your wintry graves
'Mong the grasses lowly.

Flutter gently, pretty leaves!
Cover soft and slowly
Deep our precious, new-made graves,
Cherished, loved and holy.

Shield them so, O dying leaves!
From all cold and snowing;
Make ye there your wintry graves,
Pity, pity showing.

THE FLEEING BIRDS.

OH, better that every bird should go,
Than stay but pitiful songs to sing,
Or buffeted, chilled by winds and snow,
With voices weary to greet the spring.

Better to sing the summers away,
Now here, now there, among the flowers;
We own the Love that teaches the way
His birds should go through wintry hours.

Yet, yet we grieve when out of the cold
And battle of life our loved ones go
To the summer-land, the heavenly fold,
Where more than His birds His care they know.

DREARY.

THERE'S not a bit of blue in the sky,
No tinge of blue in the air;
The world seems gray, and cold, and dead,
And lonely everywhere.

The birds have flown, the leaves are gone,
No flower lights up the way;
The winds can only sigh and moan,
The world is sad to-day.

The river frowns at low, gray skies
That only frown again;
From sea slow waves of mist drift in,
Pale heralds of the rain.

My heart makes moan for treasures gone,
And cloud and shadow come,
Yet Faith shines clear, and Hope sings near,
And Love keeps flowers a-bloom.

WAITING.

DO the little brown twigs complain
That they haven't a leaf to wear?
Does the grass, when the wind and rain
Pull at her matted hair?

Do the little brooks struggle and moan
When the ice has frozen their feet?
Does the moss turn gray as a stone,
Because of the cold and sleet?

Do the buds that the leaves left bare
To strive with their wintry fate,
In a moment of deep despair,
Destroy what they cannot create?
Oh, Nature is teaching us there
To patiently wait, and wait.

THE WINDS' CALL.

"OH, hurry and go! Oh, hurry and go!"
The wild winds say as the wild winds blow;
For chill November comes bustling down,
With gray locks streaming, and cloudy frown.
"Go, go!" to the flowers that shivering stand
All shrunken and brown, a pitiful band.
"Go, go!" to all melodious things,
From grass-pent chirp to bird that sings.
"Oh, hurry and go!" to the leaves that fly
In crowds from airy homes on high;
They huddle in heaps the hedges about,
But the winds drive on with anxious shout—
"Go cover loved graves; keep violets warm;
Flower-beds shelter from winter's harm;
There, there you may rest—oh, hurry and go!
And sleep to the soft 'Hush, hush!' of the snow.
It comes, it comes! It is on my track!
'Twill cover you warm till spring comes back!"

The leaves and flowers soon settled for rest,
And empty and still was every nest;
The upland grass grew matted and gray,
The fresh blades hid underneath away;
Slow insects, where banks southward look,
Half chilled, sought rest in favoring nook;
The world grew cold, deserted and still,
Save brown-birds' notes or song of a rill;
And over it fell, ere came one even,
The wonderful white May-bloom of heaven.

IN NOVEMBER.

THERE'S one lone cricket singing
To the dead leaves huddled nigh,
A snow bird chanting, clinging
To a bare, brown twig just by.
The winds, through tree harps sweeping,
Wake mournful chords between,
For o'er earth, gray frosts creeping
Have stolen its flowers and green.
Thou, too, O heart, art keeping
Sad thoughts of what has been.

But see, o'er all the wailing,
The lonely songs, and sad,
The gray the bright o'er veiling,
The lost that made earth glad,
The blue, bright heaven is bending
And all its brightness through
Speaks love divine, unending,
That yet shall spring renew;
That still, O heart, is blending
All wisely, best for you.

AN AUTUMN THOUGHT.

THROUGH mist of barren boughs the sun
Came streaming warmly down, and free,
Past empty nest, past lonely tree,
And scanning these, thus thought would run:

Not every tree a nest may own,
With songs to tune its glad leaves' play;
Yet dance they on from happy May,
For all air thrills with Music's tone.

So may I, if from bard or bird
By fate compelled to dwell apart,
Know all their gladness in my heart;
For earth with song is echo-stirred.

AT SUNSET.

WITH the golden peace of sunset
Fades a day, calm, spotless, bright,
Rich in jewelled glow and radiance,
Born of winter's matchless white.

In the pink flush of the dawning
Opal fires unnumbered glowed,
Diamonds blazing in the noonday
Golden gems at evening showed.

Glittering chill in sunbeam's fervor,
Winter hath few days like this,
Still as beautiful at going
As at morning's roseate kiss.

Sweetest day of June ne'er truer
In its gladness, song and flowers
Told the wisdom, skill and loving,
Making fair this world of ours;

Through each season strewing beauteous,
Peerless days, as this all fair,
Some with blooming sweet, some roses,
Some rich robed 'mid golden air.

Yet to all, though brightest, darkest,
Doth forever good belong;
Winter tells us in her silence
True as summer with her song;

Tells, too, distant joys look dearer
Than the few we toil amid,
For 'tis winter shows us vistas
That the leaves of summer hid.

AFTER THE SNOWING.

THE clouds are gone, the moon looks down,
The stars are bright;
The storm has laid a snowy crown
On peaceful night.

As former things were passed away,
All heavenly fair
Is earth in holiest array,
Meet place for prayer!

Like priests slow waving snowy hands
In ministries,
Or waiting nuns in vestal bands,
Stand spectre trees.

God's temple! aye, 'tis holy ground!
Heaven's type is here!
And almost through the hush profound
His voice we fear.

O Nature! hearts may flowers bear,
And fruits divine;
But *here* no spotless robes may wear
Like unto thine.

THE ROSE BUSH.

FOLDED close and tenderly
Deep in the snow-drift's white,
Hides my precious rose to-day,
The summer's first delight.

Oh, so gently o'er her fell
Rich showers of purity,
Wrapping her all softly in,
No twig could bended be.

Bides she so till sunlight's gold
Shall weave the whiteness through,
Then 'mid summer's green she'll wear
Gold-hearted snows anew.

IN THE SICK ROOM.

THE moon her shining, silvery fleece
Wide o'er the river's breast has lain;
The lighted bridge, a jewelled chain,
Midway its beauty spans, and peace.

There's naught astir save flashing star,
Or leafless bough, breeze-swaying slow,
My throbbing heart, with paining so,
And one lone footfall echoing far.

O heaven! thy peace thought yearningly
Mounts up night's star-lit paths to gain,
But brings me back yet more of pain;
There is no part, no part for me.

O loved! O sweet! beside thee here,
I seem to see, close reaching down,
The Hand that gave thee to my own,
And hope yields place to shuddering fear.

What life would be from thee apart
I dare not think. Oh, while I say,
Thy will be done, dear Lord, I'll pray
Forgive, forgive my pleading heart.

THE REVIEW.

A LITTLE maiden thoughtfully
Past lessons pondered o'er,
Some yet all fresh in memory,
Some half-forgotten lore.

Her thoughtful face wore loveliest hue,
And though no sound was heard,
With whispered words soft fluttering through,
Her lips like rose leaves stirred.

While yet the busy task went on,
And leaf on leaf was turned,
I thought, "They're few and sweet, dear one,
The lessons thou hast learned.

"Mayhap a time will come when thou,
As I to-night have done,
Wilt read again, not then as now,
Life's lessons, one by one.

"God grant thou may'st not see, as I,
Some thou would'st fain forget;
Some learned with only sorrow nigh,
Some I have not learned yet.

"Oh, may the sweetest ones I've known
Be only given to thee!
So to review when years have flown,
As now, as happily."

CRUMBS.

A FEW waste, scattered crumbs may call
The best the winter hath of song,
To gladden weary hours and long,
Till sweeter lays down spring airs fall.

Each varied life God scatters o'er
With hopes all bright with heavenly rays,
With memories dear of olden days,
And pure affection's priceless store.

Yet all, the best we have, in turn,
Are crumbs of joy from bliss above;
Our songs, though weak, our thanks may prove,
Till sweeter ones we hear and learn.

MIDSUMMER AFTERNOON.

NOW Nature's resting time, noonday,
Is past; yet still no stir there seems
Of growing things; hill, field, lake, shore,
Are veiled and hushed as shadowy dreams.

Yet drowsy cattle lingering mope
Where shadows nightward lengthening creep;
And weary wild flowers nod and droop,
Or fold down willing lids in sleep.

To rival songs no soft breeze floats
To song of young or parent bird;
At anchor lie the fishers' boats,
By scarcely pulsing lake unstirred.

No more the water-lilies' stars
To eager quest invite the oar,
Or pushing past the sandy bars
Through pictured clouds to drift from shore.

What sweets arise from fields new mown,
Where yesterday gay mowers stood
Waist high in feathery grass, and down
Across the white, deep-sanded road,

The armies of the rye field stand
Ungarnered, girdled, plumeless, still,
As watchers o'er the silent land
Whose promising crowns vale and hill.

The brook hath stilled her babbling song,
Nor insect voices yet compete;
O sunny noonday! tarry long,
So peaceful, beautiful and sweet!

JEANNIE'S ANSWER.

"IF you loved me once, fair Jeannie,
Love me now as then;
I have come with heart and riches
Wooing you again."

"Nay, I cannot, nay, I would not
Be your sweetheart now;
Heard you not to sailor Harry
I have given my vow?

"Brown his face is, hands are browner,
Firm his step, and right;
But his honest eyes and cheery,
They're my heart's delight.

"Soon he'll come from o'er the waters,
Soon we shall be wed;
Ne'er like you he'll bring me sorrow,
Only joy instead.

"Butterflies mourn not the roses
Vanished with the June;
Flitting birds where'er they wander
Sing the same sweet tune.

"Hie you far to fairer maidens,
All your sweethearts woo,
Better than your lands and riches
Is the heart that's true."

DAISIES.

H, the daisies! bright-eyed daisies!
All the byways crowded full;
Haloed stars of summer shining,
Whether skies are bright or dull.

All in white and gold on valley,
Hillside, roadside, field and lane
Is their heavenly message written
Wide, for comforting again.

For we read once more His loving
Who doth note the sparrow's fall,
Who doth call in crowds the flowers,
Making room and place for all.

Sunlight, too, and shower bestowing,
Manna of the night's sweet dew;
Daisies! faithful is your showing
God's rich promise true anew!

SHADOWS.

SHADOWS, o'er my work at play,
Wave me answers while I say
This to you, ere dies the day:

Writ in holy place, I see
Our days likened unto ye,
And would learn how this may be.

In the restless lot, you know,
Wafted as the breezes blow,
Hither, thither, to and fro!

Dancing through the sunny days,
Happy while the brightness stays,—
Aye, aye, these are like our ways.

In your striving each past each,
Like our human strife, you teach
God's sure mark we ne'er o'erreach.

Truest growth would we obtain,
Nearest perfectness attain,
Clearest light each, all, must gain.

Shadows, from my work passed by,
Now upon the grass ye lie
In the sunset quietly.

Yet one solemn thought I'd bring,
Past earth's for your answering—
Shadows, ye are vanishing!

Where ye played gloom enters in,
Twilight's gray veils all the scene,
And I know not where ye've been.

ANSWERED.

OH, not on proudest hills God sets
His sweetest flowers, and first to come,
Arbutus shy, and violets,
In lowliest dale and wood-nook bloom.

Loud shaking morn's still air with songs,
Glad birds wake loneliest grove and glen,
Till echo wide the sound prolongs,
Though never listening ear to gain.

How ungemmed ripples dance and break,
On either side the golden way
The sunbeams tread, till all the lake
Is stirred as if in joyous play.

And plainly now, by thought of these,
Of shaded ripples, wild, lone song,
And lowly place, Faith, answered, sees
Some wearying wherefores, pondered long.

NOVEMBER.

I LOVE thee for thy smiling sun,
That on no flower looks down,
Yet hopeful gleams and warmly lies
Along the hillsides brown.
I love thy pleading rains that fall
Like tears for songs grown still;
Thy silence, hushing Nature's sleep,
Save where a laughing rill
Runs rippling on in wanton play,
Like child unheeding loss;
I love thy depths of calm, blue sky,
Thy clouds that fly across,
Thy wild winds tossing trees like toys,
Or whirling dead leaves by,
The richer glory of thy dawns,
Or pomp of sunset sky.

But far more, this—I could not so,
While summer's wealth was mine,
Count o'er the gifts her glad hours brought,
That Memory tells with thine;
While o'er my thankful heart doth fall
Like benediction blest,
Thy Sabbath stillness, shadowing more
Than earth can give of rest.

IN A FIELD.

IT seemed a sacred place, the field
Where leafless rose trees stood
Half hid in snowy shrouds, and called
A sudden, reverent mood.

The whirling snow fell deep and fast
On beds where violets grew;
And lonely moaned the shivering blast;
Yet Faith read promise true.

As e'er had been, would come fair hours,
All sweetness, song and bloom;
So in that graveyard of the flowers
There was no place for gloom.

Then Thought went out, past hedging hill,
Where sleep 'neath Auburn's snows
My loved; nor questioned loving Will,
That wakes them, and the rose.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

THE house is hushed; each voice is still
That late in hopeful glee
Like music's merriest carols rang
About me joyously.
The Cristmas gifts completed lie,
Arranged with loving care,
Each in its place, with dear home name
Of cherished one placed there.

And as I sit with folded hands,
Awhile to muse and rest,
I cannot stay the tears that come,
Nor thoughts that stir my breast.
I think of eves like this, long gone,
And loved ones see again
Whose names with these once held dear place;
We're fewer now than then.

Some linger long who wandered out,
As birds from nest, to soar;
The dear old anchor of sweet home
Will draw them back no more.
Some, too, in hopeful rest grew still,
Nor wakened here below;
Their blessed joy Heaven's dawn to see,
And Hope's fruition know.

No more than autumn rains may call
The flowers back again—
Though tenderly they plead with all
The voices of the rain,
Can tears ne'er dried, or tenderest prayer
Win back one soft caress
From loved within the silent land—
Yet come they not to bless?
To-night will Memory tribute bring,
They seem so near, so near,
Though angel songs they're singing now,
I, listening, may not hear.

LONGING.

NOT yet had earliest wild flower strewn
Unto the wooing, wandering breeze
Its tiny seed, whose mysteries
Another spring should first make known.
When last the violets in crowds
Came, purpling all the fair fields through,
When birds were glad from dawn till dew,
And brooks ran gayly through the woods,
One sunset hour, all pink and gold,
A voice grew still, I loved it well;
A hand from out my clasping fell,
And eyelids drooped to ne'er unfold.

Then Night and Death's chill mystery
Brought gloom and sorrow's keenest dart;
The morrows come, but grief hath part
In all, and ever haunteth me.

While Christmas chimes to-night ring clear,
And happy homes glad meetings know,
Through eastern skies with stars aglow
With longing, tear-wet eyes, I peer.

Not, not to call her back anew
From heavenly places, restful, fair,
But oh, to see as pictured there
Such vision as once shepherds knew.

In that seraphic throng her face,
All glorified, I'd seek and know;
Then Christmastide would come and go,
And I heed not its loneliness.

Sweet hope! some day such joy may be,
Her angel face so to behold,
Her beckoning hand again t' enfold,
And more than Christmas gladness see.

THE NEW CHARM.

I SHALL not watch the sweet, fair flowers
With careless or indifferent eye,
In glad processions saunter by,
Through summer's sun or bright-arched showers.

For I shall think an angel one,
Who found on earth best-loved employ
Among the flowers, and sweetest joy,
Has now her ideal mission won.

More now than then, her happy care
Our fading flowers will still enfold,
Though fadeless ones she may behold,
And heavenly fields bloom far more fair.

So every wilding by the way,
And shyest hermit of the wood,
Because she loved and saw it good,
Will wear new charm in its array.

TOKENS.

BUT one pink shell from ocean's rim
Was all we brought away,
When sunset's lights were growing dim
About one blissful day.

To tell of summer's flowery throngs,
Her woods and wayside bowers,
Her golden days, morns, eves, and songs,
These have I, these dead flowers.

A few days brighter than the rest,
A few o'erfull with pain,—
These mark life's changes, saddest, best,
To memory again.

So small the tokens that may tell
Life's varying years passed o'er;
To conscious joy, yet flower and shell
One day shall speak no more.

What then shall be? Will memory live,
Unclouded and more bright,
Till all our days like spectres give
Some sign in death's still night?

So few days go without some stain,
How well soe'er we try!
Oh, must we read them o'er again,
While pale Remorse weeps nigh?

Howe'er it be, Love, merciful,
Eternal doth abide;
His name is Love who all doth rule,
Oh, will He always chide?

PETITION.

NOT mine to frame a prayer,
Father! to-night to be
Such prayer as when life's needs are e'er,
The blest may offer Thee.
To come without one want,
Complaint or sin to bring,
Of noble deed, of victory won,
Triumphantly to sing.
In terms of loftiest praise
To pour out rapturous song;
Yet from my soulful gratitude,
I'll tell the countless throng
Of mercies that are mine,
To know, to have, to hold,
That more than manna fall to me,
Aye! more an hundred fold.

Oh, grant this peace be mine,
For all the varied store,
To know content, nor restless yearn,
Anticipating more.

'Tis mine to count again
The missteps of the day,
To plead once more forgiving love,
That cheers the burdened way.
For strength to braver meet
To-morrow's strife and lure;
A heart with more of loving in,
More patience to endure.
For weakness, failure, tears,
Oh, tender pity give;
Help me above such bonds to rise,
A nobler life to live.
So full my prayer of need;
Yet more for this I pray,
The consciousness of Thy near love
Wherever leads my way.

AT MORNING.

'TIS peace of morning twilight;
Before me lies a day,
Begun in cloudless beauty,
Along a peaceful way.
So fair a gift the Father
Hath given unto me;
So pure a gift, I tremble
Lest it should sullied be.

As past its rosy portals
My feet may onward go,
What it shall bring ere nightfall
I'm glad I do not know.
If sorrow or if singing
Shall speed or stay the hours;
If frowns shall chill, or smiling
Bring cheer like Maytime flowers.

What fierce and unwon battles
My soul shall wage alone,
If those I love the dearest
At eventide be gone!
If ere the sunset curtains
With glory all the west,
I hear the waited summons
From out the land of rest,
Or if I yet shall linger
In this dear world, so fair,
I ask not; but that peace like this
May wait me here or there!

A SUMMER SONG.

BEAUTIFUL the summer hills,
Pearly tints that cover,
Valleys white with daisies' frills
Set among the clover;
Lilies starring waters fair,
Flowers, flowers everywhere.
Gold of buttercup the bee
Counts, the miser-rover;
All the roses in him see
But a fickle lover.

Beautiful the grand old trees,
Sunlight sifting over;
Trilling out their rippling glees,
Happy birds there hover.
Can this be a world for care?
Singing, singing everywhere.
Restful shades from toil invite,
Fair, soft skies lean over;
Summer! hasten not thy flight!
Every soul 's thy lover.

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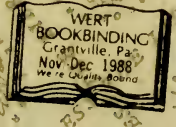
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